

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 01788 111516Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /018 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO STATE WASHDC 5237
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AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: ALIGNMENT SLIGHTLY AHEAD OF LIKUD IN YEDIOT POLL

REFS: (A) TEL AVIV 90 (B) TEL AVIV 692

1. THE LATEST POLL COMMISSIONED BY YEDIOT AHARONOT SHOWS THE ALIGNMENT SLIGHTLY AHEAD OF THE LIKUD AND A BIG DROP IN THE UNDECIDED/REFUSE TO ANSWER PERCENTAGE. THE POLL WAS TAKEN THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH, FOLLOWING THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION. TRANSLATED INTO KNESSET SEATS THE POLL GIVES THE ALIGNMENT 36, LIKUD 35; AND THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE 23.
 2. BEGIN TEXT OF YEDIOT ARTICLE: THIS POLL WAS CONDUCTED IN THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH (BETWEEN MARCH 1-7) AND ENCOMPASSED 2,010 PERSONS, I.E., TWICE THE USUAL NUMBER. THEY WERE CHOSEN ON A NATIONAL BASIS AS A REPRESENTATIVE CROSS-SECTION OF THE JEWISH POPULATION EXCLUDING AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS. THE POLL WAS EFFECTED AT THE REQUEST OF YEDIOT AHARONOT BY THE "REPORT AND SURVEY INSTITUTE" OF JERUSALEM.
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THE QUESTION POSED WAS: IF THE KNESSET ELECTIONS WERE BEING HELD TODAY, FOR WHICH LIST WOULD YOU VOTE?

3. THE ANSWERS ARE GIVEN BELOW, IN KNESSET SEATS: (FEBRUARY FIGURES GIVEN IN PARENTHESES. FOR RESULTS OF PREVIOUS MONTHS, SEE REFTELS.) ALIGNMENT 36 8339; LIKUD-35 (33); DMC - 23 (26); NRP - 9 (8);

TORAH FRONT - 4 (5); SHLOMZION - 2 (5); ILP - 2 (1);
MOKED - 1 (1); CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT - 1 (NIL); AND
RAKAH-MINORITIES - 7 (7).

4. NOTES: SINCE THE POLL DOES NOT INCLUDE THE ARAB
SECTOR WE ASSUME THAT THE VOTE IN THAT SECTOR IS STABLE.
BUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF
MANDATES ALLOTTED TO RAKAH-MINORITIES IN THE ABOVE
MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

5. 4.2 PERCENT REFUSED TO ANSWER. 18.3 PERCENT STILL
UNDECIDED. THIS IS A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT OVER
THE PREVIOUS MONTH, WHEN 11 PERCENT REFUSED TO ANSWER
AND 28 PERCENT CLAIMED THEY WERE UNDECIDED.

6. IN THE SECOND COLUMN (FEBRUARY POLL) WE SHOW THE
RESULTS OF A POLL WHICH WASNOT PUBLISHED AT THE
TIME; IT WAS HELD AND SUMMED UP ON THE EVE OF THE
CONVICTION OF ASHER YADLIN, AND THERE WAS SOME DOUBT
WHETHER IT REFLECTED REALISTIC RESULTS UNDER THESE
CONDITIONS.

7. THE CONSPICUOUS PHENOMENON, REAFFIRMED EACH MONTH,
LIES IN THE NEAR-QUALITY OF THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL
GROUPS--THE ALIGNMENT AND LIKUD. IF THE ALIGNMENT
HAS IMPROVED ITS SITUATION SOMEWHAT THIS MONTH, THIS
IS PROBABLY DUE TO THE LABOR CONVENTION, WHICH LEFT
THE PUBLIC WITH A FAVORABLE OPINION. BUT THE ALIGNMENT
IS STILL SOME 15 MANDATES BELOW ITS LEVEL IN THE
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OUTGOING KNESSET, AND THE LIKUD, THOUGH IT IS CATCHING
UP WITH THE ALIGNMENT, IS FOUR MANDATES BEHIND ITS
PRESENT NUMBER IN THE KNESSET. THE LIKUD SEEMS TO BE
BENEFITING FROM SCHLOMZION'S DECLINE IN STRENGTH.

8. THE ONLY LIST PROFITING FROM THE STEEP DROP OF THE
ALIGNMENT IS THAT OF THE DMC: THE NUMBER OF MANDATES
PROMISED THIS LIST IS OVER 20, AND IF THERE HAS BEEN
A DROP AFTER FEBRUARY, THIS WITHOUT DOUBT DERIVES FROM
A MOVEMENT OF VOTES IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, FROM THE
DMC TO THE ALIGNMENT, FOLLOWING THE LABOR CONVENTION--
AS STATED ABOVE.

9. SCHLOMZION'S DOWNWARD TREND IS A STEADY ONE: FROM
NINE MANDATES EARLY IN DECEMBER IT IS NOW DOWN TO
BETWEEN ONE AND TWO ONLY. THERE IS NO REMARKABLE
CHANGE IN ILP AND MOKED FROM THE EARLIER RESULTS.
THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT HAS RETURNED TO THE MAP
AFTER MRS. ALONI HAS DEFINITELY DECIDED TO RUN.

TRADITIONAL STABILITY PREVAILS IN THE RELIGIOUS
SECTOR. BETWEEN JANUARY AND MARCH THERE WERE MORE
EX-ALIGNMENT VOTES FOR THE DMC AND LESS EX-LIKUD
VOTES WHEN AN ANALYSIS OF THE DMC VOTES IS MADE.
END TEXT. END UNCLASSIFIED.

10. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE: THE LARGE DROP IN
THE UNDECIDED/REFUSE TO ANSWER FIGURE PROBABLY
REFLECTS THE MAKING UP OF MINDS FOLLOWING THE LABOR
CONVENTION, THE RESOLUTION OF THE RABIN-PERES CONTEST,
AND MAPAM'S DECISION TO STAY IN THE ALIGNMENT. WE
ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED THAT ALIGNMENT'S GAIN
AFTER THESE EVENTS WAS SO SMALL. THE DROP IN THE
DMC'S SHOWING BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND MARCH MAY MEAN (AS
MANY FORESAW; SEE PARA 10 TEL AVIV 874) THAT IT HAS
BEGUN TO RECEDE FROM ITS HIGH-WATER MARK.
ON THE OTHER HAND THE PICTURE OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS
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IS ONE OF RELATIVELY WIDE SWINGS IN THE DMC'S
PERCENTAGES. WE SHOULD BE BETTER ABLE TO GAUGE ITS TRUE
STANDING WHEN WE HAVE THE RESULTS OF POLLS TAKEN AFTER
MARCH 15, THE DATE OF THE DMC'S INTERNAL ELECTION.
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